

Pace in the Horse

The pace is a two-beat gait with support alternating between the left lateral (left hind and left fore) and the right lateral (right hind and right fore), with periods of suspension between the lateral support phases. Some mammals (e.g., the camel) use the pace as a normal gait; in others it appears as a fatigue gait or as a gait when the animal is forced to go at a speed where neither the walk nor the trot is comfortable. In others, such as the horse, a tendency to trot or pace is inherited, but many animals can be trained to do either or both.



Left: end of right lateral support phase, pushoff for suspension. Center and right suspended phase, ready for touchdown of left lateral on far right.



Left lateral support phase, almost ready to push off by far right photo.



Left, suspension phase. Center and right, right lateral support phase.



End of right lateral support phase, pushing off for suspended phase. Note that the right hind leg is slightly ahead of the right fore leg which still appears to be in slight contact with the ground. The footfall sequence is thus veering very slightly toward that of a walk.

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